



**Testimony  
Bart Russell  
Executive Director  
Connecticut Council of Small Towns (COST)  
Before the Labor Committee  
March 4, 2010**

**RE: SB- 300 AN ACT CONCERNING FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE  
BENEFITS FOR CERTAIN MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES.**

The Connecticut Council of Small Towns (COST) opposes **SB 300 - An Act Concerning Family and Medical Leave Benefits For Certain Municipal Employees**, which requires municipalities to grant certain ineligible municipal paraprofessionals the right to family and medical leave.

The bill would mandate that towns and cities grant certain municipal employees benefits in accordance with the state Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), which is part of the state personnel act. Under current law, municipalities already fall under the purview of the federal FMLA. Therefore, this bill would unnecessarily subject municipalities to both federal and state FMLA standards for their employees creating potential policy conflicts in employee leave benefits. This bill is also unclear with regard to how this mandate would affect leave policies for part-time municipal employees.

In previous years, the Office of Fiscal Analysis identified expansion of FMLA in this manner as a potentially costly "state mandate" on municipalities. In fact, the bill would disproportionately impact smaller communities, which may not be able to afford to operate with employees absent for prolonged periods of time. Smaller towns are not in a position to absorb the cost of paying and training a replacement worker for the employee on leave or pay coworkers overtime to share the expanded workload.

Connecticut's small towns are: great places to live, work and raise a family; independent communities with a tradition of self-sufficiency; and models of cost-effective, grassroots government. But, they're also at risk because of measures such as this that would impose yet another cumbersome mandate and financial burden that will strain local resources and threaten the residents' quality of life.

Therefore, COST urges your *opposition to SB-300*.

**Connecticut Council of Small Towns**  
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